

Food Around the World

Matthew N. O. Sadiku

Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering Prairie View A&M University
Prairie View, TX USA

Uwakwe C. Chukwu

Department of Engineering Technology South Carolina State University Orangeburg,
SC, USA

Janet O. Sadiku

Juliana King University Houston, TX, USA

ANNOTATION

Food is essential both for human growth and survival. It provides the body with energy, which is vital for its existence. Food is one of the most important aspects of any culture. It has a significant impact on our impression of place we visit. As the world gets smaller and smaller due to globalization and digitalization, it becomes easier to enjoy food from different countries. This paper compiles different popular cuisine one can expect in different nations. It provides you with international dishes and helps you to travel around the world without leaving your kitchen. These best dishes in the world are worth crossing oceans for.

KEYWORDS: food, culture, traditional food, food around the world, fast food.

INTRODUCTION

Food may be regarded as any plant or animal material, which can be consumed for nutrition and sustenance. The production and consumption of food are processes that are common to all human beings. Food is something to be protected and cherished. It has always been a key indicator of our cultural values.

Food is often one of the most important and most common means of exchange between people. When you travel to another country, your food experience has had an impact on your overall travel experience. For many people, the best part of international travel is savoring decadent local foods. The more we eat our way around the world, the better our understanding of the world becomes.

GLOBAL ISSUES WITH FOOD

In this paper, we first consider global issues related to food and then cover different foods from various countries. The global issues include food culture, food insecurity, food security, food security index, hunger, obesity, street food, fast food, slow food, staple food, strange food, food fraud, food waste, and babe food. We will consider some of these.

- *Food Culture:* Food and culture are interwoven. Food plays an important role in our personal identity. Food is an evocative force that links us with our food systems, our heritage, and our cultural traditions. Food culture may be regarded as the beliefs, attitudes, and practices related to producing and consuming food. It explores what we

consume, how we prepare it, and the people that we share it with. Food culture around the world is influenced by factors such as the local tradition, local landscape, and weather [1].

- *Food Security Index*: This measures the ability of consumers to purchase food, their vulnerability to price shocks and the presence of policies to support consumers when shocks occur. It also measures agricultural production and on-farm capabilities, the risk of supply disruption, national capacity to disseminate food, and research efforts to expand agricultural output [2].
- *Staple Food*: A food staple is a food that makes up the dominant part of a population's diet. Food staples are eaten regularly, even daily. They are derived from plants that are native to a region. For example, maize (also known as corn) is a staple food throughout most of the world. Rice is a food staple for over 3.5 billion people around the world, particularly in Asia, Latin America, and parts of Africa [3].
- *Fast Food*: Traditionally, eating involves slow food, which takes time to prepare. The introduction and popularization of fast food has shifted our habits toward eating efficiently. Fast is quick, busy, controlling, aggressive, stressed, superficial, impatient, active, and quantity-over-quality. Slow is the opposite: fresh, calm, careful, still, intuitive, unhurried, patient, reflective, and quality-over-quantity. These two concepts co-exist with each other. Eating away from home is becoming increasingly common, and the use of fast food restaurants is growing rapidly. Eating out is an outcome of changing food and eating habits of the consumers towards convenience in the present time-starved societies. Some of the fast foods are harmful to our health, For example, french fries are regarded as a "junk food" or an accompaniment to a burger or sandwich in most countries [4,5].
- *Baby Food*: Around the world, baby's first foods reflect any given culture's native cuisine. In some cultures, children are raised to eat what their families eat or a gentler version of whatever their parents eat. Some consider certain foods as being "inappropriate" for babies such as bitter vegetables, soups and broths, meats, and spices. For example, in the United Kingdom, babies eat rice cereal, pureed vegetables, fruit. Figure 1 shows a mother feeding her child with baby food [6].

FOOD FROM DIFFERENT NATIONS

The increasing world population has demanded the need to expand global food production. Food production affects global food security as well as global food supply-demand relationship. The global community is currently experiencing constraints imposed by our resource system, which drives industry to find ways of improving existing processes or finding new uses for waste. Food says so much about a nation's history, climate, and culture. We consider traditional foods from different parts of the world [7-13].

1. *Food from North America*: The popular traditional foods in North America includes hamburger, French fries, bagel, shrimps, lobster, barbecue, cheesesteak, and pork. One pays a lot for food in North America.

- *United States* is the home of immigrants from different nations. As a result, the US is among the best because of the famous food of different countries where people immigrated from. They have perfected the art of making pizza, hamburgers, French fries, chocolate chips, cookies, etc. Most of their dinner dishes are dominated by meat such as steak, chicken, or beef patty, that is served with potatoes or some other vegetables. The

hamburger with French fries is a staple of American fast food. US burger is shown in Figure 2 [8]. McDonald's, KFC, Pizza Hut, Burger Kings, and more are always readily available 24/7. American-style fast food has spread to other nations as well. French fries contain high fat and cholesterol which can lead to obesity and cardiovascular diseases. An average American is taller and heavier when compared with Asians from China, Japan, and Korea. In America, the main protein would be some sort of beef or chicken eaten with bread. America is the home of the burger and fries combo.

- *Canada's* national, favorite dish is Poutine. It consists of French fries with cheese curds topped with gravy. Poutine is Canada's national dish. Its origins date back to the 1950s. Poutine includes French fries and cheese curds topped with traditional brown chicken gravy. It is usually served at room temperatures. Restaurants all across Canada offer their own version of poutine.

2. *Food from South America:* South American dishes tend to be exotic and tasty. They are characterized with meat dishes, corn breads, and delicious fish recipes.

- *Mexico* is surely a go-to country if you are looking for delicious cuisines. Mexican cuisine originates from Europe, Africa, and India. Mexicans have enchiladas, tacos, beans, and the quesadillas, among others. To them, food is associated with love and family bonding. The traditional method of cooking Cochinita Pibil is what also makes it one of the country's most foods. In Mexico City, one type of taco reigns supreme: tacos al pastor. The taco consists of three components: a meat, a tortilla, and salsa.
- *Brazil's* people typically eat yam, tapioca, or rice along with pork or beef stew. Feijoada is the most traditional national dish in Brazil. It is a mix of black beans cooked on low heat with beef and pork for hours and hours, stewed to perfection.
- *Cuba* has no official national dish. But Cuban flan is one dessert one will find on every menu in the country. Every Cuban eats flan and grows up learning how to whip up this easy recipe. Due in part to trade restrictions and food-supply issues, Cuban cuisine does not tend to be as exciting as many of its Caribbean neighbors.

Ropa Vieja is a traditional Cuban dish which is made with shredded beef, tomato sauce, onions, and peppers. Cubans usually try to reduce waste by reusing anything they can.

3. *Food from Europe:* Each country in Europe has a slightly different recipe. Bramboráky (a pan-fried potato pancakes made of dough) is one of the most popular traditional dishes in Czech Republic. The dish is common throughout Central Europe. In Europe, it is expensive for travelers to eat out three times every day as can be done in most parts of Asia.

- *Italy* never misses on the list of the best countries for food. Italia proudly comes with a wide range of the best food dishes in the world. Italian dishes are a favorite for millions of people all over the world. Italian cuisine is a perfect mixture of colors and incredible taste. Italians love to eat meat, fish, vegetables, pasta, pizza, spaghetti, rice, or bread for dinner with passion for each dish that is served to them. Its popular dishes include pizza, cheesy risottos, and pasta. A simple pasta meal by an Italian chef will be finger licking sweet. Figure 3 shows Italian pizza [8].
- *Britain* has one of the most quintessential meals around. It's beer-battered fried fish and crispy French fries. For dessert, serve up a scoop of raspberry ripple, or another frozen treat from around the world. Fish and chips constitute a fairly standard dish served

with mushy peas. While this may not be everyone's favorite food, it is certainly one of the country's most traditional.

- *France* is the home of French fries, which are a favorite for the majority of people all over the world. Their staple food is cheese, while their famous delicacies include Bisque, Macarons, and terrine. Beef bourguignon is a meal the whole family will love. Traditionally cooked for hours, cassoulet recipe offers the same homey taste in less time. One can describe French cuisine in one word: contemporary. France has its wide list of first-class cheeses such as Munster cheese, Brie, Camembert, and Roquefort.
- *Turkish* cuisine is one of the most influential in the world. Recipes that are based on meat, rice and vegetables have become so attractive to the world that Turkish restaurants can be found everywhere. For importing Turkish delights in the US and Canada, some websites can be helpful such as Best Turkish Food. Authentic French garlic soup is made of smashed garlic, salt, pepper, cloves, thyme, sage, bay leaves, olive oil, egg yolks, shredded cheese, and baguette.

4. *Food from Africa:* Africa is home to incredible wildlife and all kinds of delicious foods. Many African nations, especially those in South and East Africa, rely heavily on Ugali (corn meal) as a staple food. Fufu is another popular traditional West African dish made from boiled starchy root vegetables which are pounded into a dough-like consistency. It is typically served with a soup or stew. Figure 4 portrays African cuisines in taste atlas [12]. Trying to capture the entirety of the continent's eating culture is next to impossible. We only use two countries as typical examples.

- *South Africa* is a perfect destination for those who love exotic delicious food. Just walking through the streets you will find numerous tasty treats and sumptuous meals in various restaurants. South Africans are less strictly traditional and enjoy roast lamb, beef, and chicken. They enjoy a wide range of drinks, from wine to beer. Local dishes can be described as a mixture of Afrikaner, Zulu, and Indian cuisines. Bobotie is a popular South African dish. It consists of minced beef meat that is spiced with slightly sweet curry and baked with an egg-based custard on top. Giraffe meat can be found in some restaurants and hotels and can only be sold by approved sellers.
- *Nigeria* is home to a tasty rice dish called jollof rice. It is made from rice, tomatoes, spices, vegetables, and meat, all cooked in a single pot. Jollof rice is usually served with fried plantains, steamed vegetables, salad, or moi-moi (a type of boiled bean pudding). Jollof rice has its origins hotly contested by Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal and a few other West African countries. In the Nigerian version, the rice is added to a spicy tomato sauce and simmered until ready. This is displayed in Figure 5 [11]. Other common foods in Nigeria includes yams, spiced rice, cassava, plantains, and beans.
- *Tanzania's* Ugali is considered to be the national dish of Tanzania. Ugali originated in Kenya, but is popular in many East African countries and known under various different names. Ugali is a simple dish made out of white cornmeal cooked in water. It is served alongside most traditional Tanzanian.

5. *Food from Asia:* Asian cuisines are also very common today and are attractive for their colorful dishes consisting of many ingredients and strong flavors. The cheapest foods around the world are to be found in Thailand and Vietnam. In both countries, one can buy a good meal for just \$1 US.

- *India* tops the list of food countries that have mouthwatering, finger licking dishes. Indians are vegetarians because their meals do not include beef, considering that cows are sacred for them. Indian food includes Chai and Dal, which combines several spices, resulting in rich curries with a delicious, spicy pepper taste. Indian food is a great choice for those who like vegetarian dishes with lots of spices. Indian food is ranked as in Figure 6 [13]. A traditional northern Indian is mutton korma, which is made with mutton, yogurt, fried onions, and spices.
- *China* has diverse and sumptuous foods due to their large population. The Chinese are among the few handfuls of nations that preserve their indigenous culture and tradition as displayed in their way of life. Their favorite dishes include spring rolls, tofu, dumplings, noodles, sweet, and sour chicken. When the rest of the world uses forks and knives, the Chinese are still using chopsticks. Figure 7 depicts a traditional Chinese tea house in Chengdu [1]. Chengdu is known for its flavored rabbit heads. This delicacy is loved by many locals.
- *Japan* is popular known for being expensive. It is meticulous in everything they do include cooking. They have also maintained their indigenous culture and traditions. Like the Chinese, the Japanese are still using chopsticks. Their staple food is white rice, which may be combined with other dishes. The favorite dishes include Sake, Ramen, Sushi, Tempura, Unagi, and Sashimi. For example, Sushi tastes best when served with wasabi, pickled ginger, and soy sauce. Ramen is a dish made of wheat noodles and served in the broth along with vegetables and meat. A lot of people are willing to learn how to use chopsticks just to enjoy Japanese cuisine. A typical Japanese dish is shown in Figure 8 [9]. The Japanese noodle soup, ramen has grown in popularity outside of Japan in the last decade.
- *Thailand* is the home of “hot” food. Their foods literally bring the heat because they are spicy, crunchy, chewy, slippery, sour, and salty. Their foods have five different tastes all in one meal. It is amazing how one can experience sweetness, saltiness, chilliness, slipperiness, and crunchiness with a single bite. Like most countries in Asia, rice is their staple food. Thai’s cuisine is a combination of different flavors of other countries surrounding it such as China, Indonesia, and Malaysia.. Thailand probably has the best street food in the world. Figure 9 shows a typical Thai dish [9].
- *Vietnam* has the healthiest meals, compared with other Asian nations. Their dishes are finger-licking. Their favorite dishes include herbs, rice, shrimp, fish, vegetables, and fruits. A typical Vietnamese dish consists of rice, noodles, and meat (usually beef or chicken) served in broth and topped with herbs. Pho is a popular street food item, flavorful, and yet balanced in nature. It is perhaps the best known traditional Vietnamese dish known worldwide.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, we have presented foods from all over the world. Food is more than just sustenance. Every dish presents a story about different cultures, histories, and identities. The dishes stick in our memories from our travels at home and abroad. The local, authentic street food could be a good choice as the best food around the world. Rice is a staple everywhere. Salad has the first place in the most eaten/popular foods category. Whether it is fruit salad, tuna salad, egg salad, or even just plain green leafy salad. It’s one of the most popular foods, in the world.

With so many dishes around the world, it is impossible to cover all of them. This paper covers the best and most popular dishes. More information about food around the globe can be found in the books in [14-22].

REFERENCES

1. E. Lush, "UNESCO food culture: 30 amazing culinary traditions around the world," December 2022,
<https://wander-lush.org/food-culture-unesco/>
2. "The 11th Global Food Security Index shows a deterioration in the global food environment for the third year, threatening food security,"
<https://impact.economist.com/sustainability/project/food-security-index/>
3. "Food staple," <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/food-staple>
4. M. N. O. SADIKU, T. J. ASHAOLU, AND S. M. MUSA, "SLOW FOOD: A PRIMER," *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SCIENCE, ENVIRONMENT AND TECHNOLOGY*, VOL. 8, NO. 4, AUG. 2019, PP. 912-917.
5. M. N. O. Sadiku, T. J. Ashaolu, and S. M. Musa, "Fast food: An introduction," *International Journal of Trend in Research and Development*, vol. 6, no. 6, 2019, pp. 80-83.
6. "Baby food around the world: What baby's first foods are around the world,"
<https://amaraorganicfoods.com/blogs/blog/baby-food-around-the-world-what-babys-first-foods-are-around-the-world>
7. R. Pratt, "These are the 15 best countries for food around the world," October 2018,
<https://www.aworldtotravel.com/best-countries-for-food-around-the-world/>
8. "Top 15 best countries for food lovers,"
<https://www.travelsafe-abroad.com/countries-for-food-lovers/>
9. "22 best dishes in the world you must try once in your life,"
<https://www.holidify.com/pages/best-dishes-in-the-world-1532.html>
10. "60 most famous foods around the world to try in a lifetime," March 13, 2021
<https://www.worldtravelconnector.com/famous-foods-around-the-world/>
11. "World's most delicious dishes you'll want to try,"
<https://www.lovefood.com/gallerylist/81561/the-worlds-most-delicious-dishes-youll-want-to-try>
12. "30 maps reveal the tastiest dishes around the world,"
https://www.boredpanda.com/taste-atlas-food-map/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=organic
13. "People ranked a bunch of popular foods from around the world, and the results are interesting," October 2021,
<https://finance.yahoo.com/news/people-ranked-bunch-popular-foods-173103320.html>
14. C. M. Hall et al.(eds.), *Food Tourism Around the World*. Routledge, 2004.
15. D. Bagchi (ed.), *Nutraceutical and Functional Food Regulations in The United States and Around the World*. Elsevier, 2014.

16. J. Ridgwell and J. Ridgway, *Food Around the World*. Oxford University Press, USA, 1987.
17. C. M. Hall and L. Sharples, *Food and Wine Festivals and Events Around the World: Development, Management And Markets*. Routledge, 2008.
18. K. Albala (ed.), *Food Cultures of the World Encyclopedia*. ABC-CLIO, 2011.
19. D. L. Plucknett and N. J. H. Smith, *Gene Banks and the World's Food*. Princeton University Press, 2014.
20. C. Petrini, *Slow Food Nation: Why Our Food Should Be Good, Clean, and Fair*. Rizzoli Publications, 2013.
21. J. Clapp, *Food*. John Wiley & Sons, 2020.
22. J. Ridgwell, *Food Around the World*. Oxford University Press, 1987.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Matthew N.O. Sadiku is a professor emeritus in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at Prairie View A&M University, Prairie View, Texas. He is the author of several books and papers. His areas of research interest include computational electromagnetics and computer networks. He is a life fellow of IEEE.

Uwakwe C. Chukwu is an associate professor in the Department of Industrial & Electrical Engineering Technology of South Carolina State University. He has published several books and papers. His research interests are power systems, smart grid, V2G, energy scavenging, renewable energies, and microgrids.

Janet O. Sadiku holds bachelor degree in Nursing Science in 1980 at the University of Ife, now known as Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria and Master's degree from Juliana King University, Houston, TX in December 2022. She has worked as a nurse, educator, and church ministries in Nigeria, United Kingdom, Canada, and United States. She is a co-author of some papers and books.



Figure 1 A mother feeding her child with baby food [6].



Figure 2 US hamburger with French fries [8].



Figure 3 Italian pizza [8].



Figure 4 African cuisines in taste atlas [12].



Figure 5 Nigerian version of jollof rice [11].



Figure 6 Indian food is ranked [13].



Figure 7 A traditional Chinese tea house in Chengdu [1].



Figure 8 A typical Japanese dish [9].



Figure 9 A typical Thai dish [9].